

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals, which participate in an auction, said server computer comprising: a merchandise database storing a plurality of merchandise information; means for selecting merchandise information from said merchandise database on a basis of provided bid information of a participant; and means for causing to notify the selected merchandise information as alternative merchandise information to a terminal, wherein said selecting means selects the merchandise information except for a successful bidder.

Claim 2 (Original): The server computer of claim 1, wherein said selecting means comprises: means for extracting preference information on a basis of stored bid information of a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder; and means for selecting merchandise information on a basis of the preference information.

Claim 3 (Canceled).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals which participate in an auction, said server computer comprising: an auction execution unit configured to hold an electronic auction, said auction execution unit comprising, a providing module configured to provide exhibited merchandise information for the auction to the terminals, and a receiving module configured

to receive bid information, which includes bid information indicating a bidder from the terminals and configured to store the bid information; a merchandise database storing a plurality of merchandise information; means for selecting merchandise information from the merchandise database on a basis of the stored bid information of a bidder; and means for causing to notify the selected merchandise information as alternative merchandise information to a terminal, wherein said selecting means selects the merchandise information except for a successful bidder.

Claim 5 (Original): The server computer of claim 4, wherein said selecting means comprises: means for extracting preference information on a basis of bid information stored for a bidder and the exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder, and means for selecting merchandise information on a basis of the preference information.

Claim 6 (Canceled).

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals which participate in the auction, said server computer comprising: means for extracting preference information on a basis of bid information stored for a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder; means for causing a communication unit to transmit the preference information to an exhibitor, wherein said extracting means extracts the merchandise information except for a successful bidder.

Claim 8 (Canceled).

Claim 9 (Original): A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals which participate in the auction, said server computer comprising: a storage unit storing bid information; means for extracting preference information on the basis of bid information stored for a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder; means for associating the preference information and bid information and for storing same; means for receiving alternative merchandise information selected by an exhibitor; means for causing to notify the alternative merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal on a basis of the associated preference information and bid information, wherein said extracting means extracts the merchandise information except for a successful bidder.

Claim 10 (Canceled).

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals which participate in the auction, said server computer comprising:

means for extracting preference information on a basis of bid information stored for a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder;

means for causing a communication unit to transmit the preference information to an exhibitor;

means for receiving alternative merchandise information selected by the exhibitor;  
means for causing to notify the alternative merchandise information as alternative  
merchandise to a terminal except for a successful bidder.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): A server computer for electronically introducing  
merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected  
through a network to a plurality of terminals which participate in the auction, said server  
computer comprising: means for holding the auction electronically, said auction holding  
means, comprising, means for providing exhibited merchandise information for the auction to  
the terminals, and means for receiving bid information, which includes information indicating  
a bidder, from the terminals and for storing the bid information; means for extracting  
preference information on a basis of bid information stored for a bidder and exhibited  
merchandise information bid on by the bidder; means for causing a communication unit to  
transmit the preference information to an exhibitor; means for receiving alternative  
merchandise information selected by the exhibitor; means for causing to notify the alternative  
merchandise information as alternative merchandise to the terminal except for a successful  
bidder.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A method of electronically introducing merchandise  
information to a participant bidding in an electronic auction after closing the electronic  
auction, in a system including a server computer connected through a network to a plurality  
of terminals which participate in the auction, said method comprising: selecting merchandise  
information from a plurality of merchandise information on a basis of bid information bid by

a participant; and causing to transmit the selected merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal except for a successful bidder.

Claim 14 (Original): The method of claim 13, wherein said selecting step comprises: extracting preference information on a basis of the bid information and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the participant; and selecting the merchandise information on a basis of the preference information from the plurality of merchandise information.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A method of electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electronic auction, comprising: providing exhibited merchandise information for the auction to terminals of participants, receiving bid information, which includes information indicating each participant from the terminals; storing the bid information; selecting merchandise information from a plurality of merchandise information on a basis of the stored bid information; and causing to transmit the selected merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal of a participant except for a successful bidder.

Claim 16 (Original): The method of claim 15, wherein said selecting step comprises: extracting preference information on a basis of the bid information and exhibited merchandise information bid on by a participant; and selecting merchandise information on a basis of the preference information from the plurality of merchandise information.

Claim 17 (Canceled).

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A method of electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, comprising:

storing bid information; extracting preference information on a basis of bid information stored for a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder; associating the reference information and bid information and storing same; receiving alternative merchandise information selected by an exhibitor, and

causing to notify the alternative merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal except for a successful bidder on a basis of the associated preference information and bid information.

Claim 19 (Original): A computer program product comprising a computer storage medium having a computer program code mechanism embedded in the computer storage medium configured to perform the steps recited in any one of claims 13-18.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): An auction system, comprising:  
a plurality of terminals offering bids for exhibited merchandise information in an electronic auction; and a server computer connected the plurality of terminals through a network, configured to hold the auction, said server, including, a providing module providing exhibited merchandise information to the terminals, a receiving module receiving bid information, which includes information indicating a bidder from the terminals and storing the bid information;

a merchandise database storing a plurality of merchandise information;  
means for selecting merchandise information from the merchandise database on a basis of stored bid information for a bidder; and

means for causing to notify the selected merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal of the bidder except for a successful bidder.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): Are auction system, comprising:

a plurality of terminals offering a bid on exhibited merchandise information;

a terminal of an exhibitor; and

a server computer, connected the plurality of terminals and the terminal of the exhibitor through a network, and configured to hold an auction, said server, including, means for providing exhibited merchandise information for the auction to the terminals, and means for receiving bid information, which includes information indicating a bidder from the terminals and for storing the bid information, means for extracting preference information on a basis of the stored bid information of the bidder, and the exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder;

means for causing a communication unit to transmit a preference information to the exhibitor;

means for receiving an alternative merchandise information selected by exhibitor;

means for causing to notify the alternative merchandise information as an alternative merchandise to the terminal except for a successful bidder.